

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

TO THE

PAUL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

FOR THE YEAR 1898.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report for the year 1898.

Inspection of the District.

During the year all parts of the district have been periodically inspected.

House Accommodation and Repairs.

House accommodation remains much as before. Two new houses were built at Newlyn during the year, one at Mousehole, and four in country parts of the district. As to the rest cottages are mostly old, but generally in fair condition. Many are without courtlages and most without closets. In many close packing of the inhabitants exists, but pronounced overcrowding is rare.

During the year in the case of two houses structural repairs were effected, and in 34 cases house drains put right after notice from the Authority.

Drainage.

The sewerage of Street-an-Nowan, Newlyn, carried out on behalf of your Authority during the past year, with a discharge outside the Harbour, is a welcome instalment of sanitary advance. When the rest of Newlyn has been dealt with in like manner the reproach of its existence as an insanitary cesspool will be finally lifted from the Newlyn Harbour, provided that the roads, cliffs, slipways, &c., be no longer fouled by the emptying of domestic refuse-pails.

The relaying of the County Drain at Street-an-Nowan by the County Sanitary Authority has removed an offensive nuisance which has been the subject of frequent complaint over a long period. The change effected has been, however, attended by a serious flooding of surface water at all times of excessive rainfall, but I trust that your Authority has healed this defect by piping the surplus into the Tolcarn stream.

Some necessary improvement in drainage has also been effected during the year at Salt Ponds, Mousehole.

Water Supply.

The piping and protection of water at Fox's Shoot and at Pedn-an-Cause, Mousehole, will, I hope, be followed by a more general distribution of supply to the various parts of the town.



School Closets.

The alteration from cesspits to pail-closets at the Newlyn Board School so long and persistently advocated by me is a matter of especial satisfaction, removing a long-continued nuisance and a menace to the health of those daily congregated upon the school premises. The ~~bi-weekly~~^{two} clearance^{a week} provided by your cart seems so far to have worked efficiently, and the decrease of effluvia from the closets, now that they no longer harbour more than a half-weeks' output is marked.

I am glad to gather in the case of the similar installation at the Mousehole Wesleyan School, that there has been of late less difficulty in effecting the removal of the pail-contents, and that they are in consequence no longer conveyed into the stream that runs down through Mousehole.

The Harbour Urinals at Newlyn.

The drainage of these pier-urinals has been improved and the interiors whitewashed, to their manifest improvement.

Scavenging.

The scavenging of Newlyn and of Mousehole continue to be undertaken by your Authority. The consequent improvement in the aspect of the roads, cliff-sides, and streams is, though of slow advance, I think ever increasingly evident.

Bake-houses, Slaughter-houses, Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops.

There are 14 bakehouses : 8 at Newlyn, 6 at Mousehole : unregistered. There is one slaughterhouse at Newlyn, unregistered, but kept in good condition. There are 36 dairies, cowsheds and milkshops. These are not registered, but are from time to time inspected.

Monthly Reports.

The usual Monthly Reports of sickness and deaths have been made by me to your Authority during the year, and copies thereof have been at the same times sent to the Sanitary Committee of the Cornwall County Council.

Tables A and B.—Vital Statistics for 1898. Comparison of the Death-rates—(A) for the District—(B) for the separate localities within the same, for the years 1892—8.

During 1898, 189 births (101 male, 88 female) were registered. 101 deaths (57 male, 44 female) took place. Thus, the male births and deaths were 13 in excess of the female, and the natural increase of the population amounted to 88, a high proportional number. In previous years it has been noted that female deaths have been generally a little in excess of the male. The birth-rate for the year was 31.75, the death rate 16.97, a little above last year's (16.68) and above the average of the preceding 5 years (16.12). The infantile mortality is 121.69 per 1000 births, a lower rate than last year's (155.17), though higher than the average of the 5 years preceding (103.21). The zymotic death-rate for the year is 1.68, being equivalent to the lowest recorded during the last 7 years.

The following table gives the death-rates for the district and separate localities during the last seven years :—

		Population.		Deaths.		Death-rates.					
		Census, 1891.		1898.	1898.	1897.	1896.	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.
NEWLYN	...	... 3,323		50	15.05	15.35	11.74	14.44	16.6	21.06	13.54
MOUSEHOLE 1,602		30	18.73	18.73	18.73	13.1	14.4	14.35	12.48
COUNTRY DISTRICT 1,036		21	20.27	17.37	13.51	29.92	16.45	24.13	18.34
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		5,961		101	16.97	16.68	13.92	16.83	15.97	19.79	14.09

INFLUENZA, &c.

As in neighbouring districts, Influenza was prevalent during the first 3 months of the year. The disease was at its height during February, when 2 deaths at Newlyn and 2 at Mousehole occurred. Another death at Mousehole in March brought the total mortality of the epidemic to 5. The youngest death from this cause was at 50 years of age. Nine deaths from respiratory diseases (out of the year's total of 22) took place during February and March, in addition to 2 (out of the year's list of 7) from Phthisis. The deaths were particularly numerous in February, and especially among the aged (at 65 years and upwards). Penzance records show that January was a sunless, humid month, and that in February 26 out of 28 were "rainy days," and it is noteworthy that the record of mortality within that town for February is (even in detail) of a like character to that within our own district.

Summer Diarrhœa.

Two deaths took place in August (1 in Newlyn, 1 in Mousehole), and 2 in September (both at Newlyn), making 4 in all from this cause. The deaths were at 3 months, 4 months, 7 months, and 8 months of age. At the same time Diarrhœa was prevalent in neighbouring districts.

Whooping Cough.

Whooping Cough was prevalent in the district as in adjoining ones during the last few months of the year. Two deaths occurred in Newlyn in November, and 1 in December, making 3 in all (all under 1 year of age).

Newlyn.

This year, as in 1897 and 1896, Newlyn has again assigned to it the lowest death-rate of the 3 localities into which our district is divided. Here one more death than in 1897 gives a slightly advanced death-rate. The occurrence of 3 (out of the 4) deaths from Infantile Diarrhœa at Newlyn, and of the 3 from Whooping Cough, raises its Infantile mortality.

Among other deaths were the 2 from Influenza above noted, 10 from ordinary respiratory diseases (including 5 among infants), 4 from Phthisis, 2 from Heart Disease, 3 from Cancer, and 3 from Whooping Cough (under 1 year of age).

Of notified diseases 3 cases of Scarlet Fever (1 fatal), 1 of Diphtheria (fatal), and 2 cases of Typhoid were reported to me during the year. The case of Diphtheria (at Newlyn Town) was associated with imperfect drainage.

Mousehole.

The death-rate for Mousehole is the same as in the two preceding years. The mortality under 5 years of age is low, but for age-periods between 5 and 65 there are more deaths recorded than in either of the other localities within the district.

The infantile death from Diarrhoea and 3 deaths from Influenza have been mentioned ; 3 deaths were due to ordinary respiratory diseases, 3 to Phthisis, 2 to Heart Disease, 1 to Cancer.

Of notified diseases 14 cases of Scarlatina occurred at Mousehole (February to July), and 2 cases of Typhoid Fever. Of the Typhoids one was imported from Ireland ; the other occurred in the person of a boy of 5 at Keigwin Court, and proved fatal.

Country District.

The country portion, as in some previous years, has the highest general mortality of the district. It has also the highest infant mortality, estimated on the assumed population. In both cases the position is due to the large proportion of deaths from respiratory diseases. Nine of the 22 deaths in this table for the year occurred in the country parts of the district, and 5 took place at under 5 years of age. Although no deaths from Influenza were recorded in the country parts, it is noteworthy that 6 of the 9 deaths from Bronchitis, &c., took place in February and March, when Influenza was prevalent in neighbouring districts. Other deaths were 2 from Heart Disease, 1 from Cancer. No cases of Phthisis are recorded, and none of Diarrhoea. No notifiable diseases were reported.

Need of Hospital Accommodation and Disinfecting Apparatus,

The fact that throughout the country generally the proportion of unvaccinated children is increasing, and the fear that the increase will grow, make it especially incumbent upon me at this time to direct your attention to the great danger confronting you from lack of these at all times necessary sanitary provisions. Should a Smallpox epidemic arrive, it will find you altogether without the necessary resources to limit its spread. Such hasty vaccination as is possible of the hitherto careless and indifferent will prove but a weak weapon, and the unisolated disease will inevitably make a heavy toll of victims among the imperfectly protected community. I hope this outlook will spur you to make the necessary provision of hospital accommodation and disinfecting apparatus without delay.

I am, Gentlemen,

Faithfully yours,

RICHARD DAVEY BOASE,
M.O.H., PAUL.

5, MORRAB ROAD,
PENZANCE,

January 30th, 1899.

